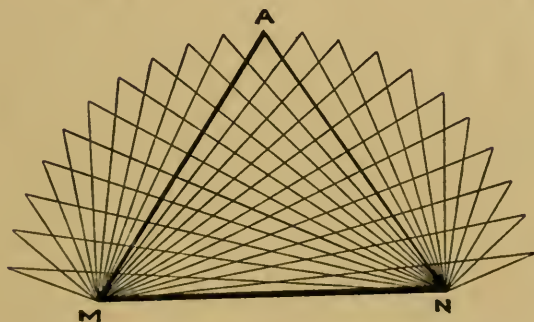


THE GREAT WORK IN AMERICA



The Philosophy of Individual Life

JANUARY 1926

Volume I

Number 9

THE GREAT WORK IN AMERICA

A monthly magazine, published by J. E. Richardson, the first day of every month. This journal co-ordinates the known facts and principles of physical Nature with the demonstrated facts and principles of spiritual Nature; giving to the world an authentic statement of the teachings and findings of the Great School Of Natural Science.

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THE GREAT WORK IN AMERICA

THE GREAT PRAYER

GREAT FATHER, to whom we are all as but children;
Friends of the friendless, and Helpers of those who need;
Be our Friends when other friends have failed us;
Be our Helpers in the hour of our extremity,
In so far as may be for our mutual good,
Be with us this day
And through all the days of this our earthly life.
Lead us by the Hand of Love;
Point us to the Pathway of Duty,
Bear with us when we stumble over the pathway
Which leads onward and upward into the Light,
And we shall hope, one day, to stand with You,
In the midst of the Radiant Splendor
Of Eternal Truth,
And we shall be ever grateful.

May it be so.

SPIRITUALITY AND POVERTY

What is the scientific relationship between true spirituality and material poverty?

If I should say—they seem to be *twins*, I have no doubt my readers, some of them at least, would hold me in contempt on the ground of frivolity.

Within the last few days a friend asked me, in the most serious and troubled manner, this question:

“Why is it that men like Brother Joseph (Sadony), yourself, and the men of all past history, whose lives are devoted to spiritual things, and to the unselfish endeavor to lead humanity upward into a definite knowledge of the higher life—must suffer the privations and self-denials that result from material poverty?”

In other words—why is it that those who are rich in the material wealth of this world are never the ones who achieve spiritual Mastership upon the physical plane of life?

Is there some subtle thing involved in the possession of material wealth that handicaps its possessor in his efforts to reach the spiritual heights, or spiritual independence and Mastership?

Those who are familiar with the teachings of the Master, Jesus, will recall the fact that this same subject was propounded to him. In chapter XIX of the Book of Matthew, it is narrated that the rich young man asked of him: “What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?”

To this the Master replied: “Keep the commandments.”

The young man said: “Which?”

The Master then repeated a number of the commandments, and the young man replied: “All these things have I kept from my youth up: What lack I yet?”

And Jesus said to him: “If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.” But the young man, having heard, “went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions”.

“Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you,

That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

"And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

If the Master is correctly quoted, it is clear that he did not think it possible for a rich man to enter into the spiritual kingdom. Of course, if the eye of the needle were big enough, and the camel were small enough, he might get through it; but, in any event, it would require such an enormous needle and such a lilliputian camel as to make the feat virtually impossible.

It therefore seems sufficiently clear that he did not think a rich man had much of a chance to enjoy the blessings of spiritual illumination, so long as he clung to his material riches.

But my friend would still be asking: "Why? Why? Why?" And we might all do well to pause and consider just why it was that the Master considered it so difficult as to be virtually impossible for one who possesses great material wealth to accomplish spiritual illumination, or any great degree of spiritual unfoldment and power, while he still counts his material wealth of first importance, and is ready to turn away from the higher life rather than part with his material possessions.

Let me see if I can throw some light upon the perplexing problem that has constituted the hurdle at which so many of the children of earth have balked, and "turned away sorrowful".

1. It seems to be a thing that is virtually fundamental in human nature, that any honest and conscientious work for the unselfish benefit of humanity—and especially if that work be of a spiritual nature and involves the educational evolution of the Soul, or psychic nature of man—cannot be commercialized without destroying its spiritualizing and uplifting potency and value.

This fact seems to have been fully recognized and understood, as well as deeply appreciated, by the Great School, so far back in the history and development of its Work, that it now stands as a demonstrated Fact of Natural Science.

This means that the instruction itself cannot be sold to students and friends of the School and Work in such manner that

its teachers and instructors shall receive a material profit or reward, over and above the actual cost of carrying on the Work.

When the Great Master said: "By an endless chain of Gifts shall the Great Work be established"—he was only recognizing the same fundamental principle, as well as the same characteristic of human nature that rebels against "making merchandise" of those things which, by their essential natures, are and must ever be "Gifts of the Spirit".

Do I mean by this that there is a Moral Law, or a fundamental Law of Spiritual Life, which prohibits one in my own position, or in the position of Brother Joseph, from receiving material compensation of any kind for his services to his fellows?

No. That is not what I am trying to say. Indeed, there is nothing whatever within the realms of Morality or Spirituality, to prohibit me or Brother Joseph, from receiving sufficient material means (from those who have benefited from our spiritual and psychical ministrations) to supply us with the material necessities of life—and such of the comforts as do not involve hardship or harm to others.

But whatever material compensation comes to either of us carries with it the fixed obligation and responsibility to devote it to the cause of humanity wherein we labor, and in so doing never to turn a deaf ear to the cry of anyone who has the moral right to come to us for the help that we can give—no matter whether the cry comes from one who is penniless or who has millions at his command.

Then why is it that such men, throughout the ages, have labored in material poverty? Why have they not used their powers to amass material wealth enough to make them physically independent?

This is because no man can carry on successfully two distinct and divergent lines of human endeavor—each of which (to make it successful) demands all his time, thought, attention and personal effort.

To make this clear by a personal illustration—there has never been a time, during the 42 years and more that I have

devoted to the Great School and its Work, when I could not have commanded wealth in great abundance. To do this, however, would have demanded that I concentrate all my time, attention and personal effort upon the purely physical plane of life, with the single purpose in mind of making money. But what would this mean to the Great Work? Simply that I must turn away from it, close the doors of the spiritual life, put it all out of my thought, purpose and consciousness—until I had amassed sufficient wealth to purchase my intellectual and spiritual freedom for the remainder of my physical life. Then only would it be possible for me to return to the Great Work, take up its higher responsibilities and carry them forward successfully.

In the meantime—because of the fact that the uncertainties of this life are so many and so vital—physical death or disability may have overtaken me, and I may thereby have lost my opportunity to accomplish any part of the Great Work for humanity, to which I obligated myself when I accepted the responsibility of representing the School in America.

Furthermore, suppose I have amassed a fortune and still possess the physical health and vitality to take up the Great Work again where I laid it down when I stopped to work out my physical freedom. The very possession of material wealth fixes upon me obligations so to invest it, care for it, use it and administer it, that I shall meet the Law of Right Use.

Insofar as this is true, I have only fastened about my neck other hindrances which prevent me from being free to give all my time and effort to the Work of the School for humanity. And in just that far, I have failed to accomplish the liberation I sought when I turned aside from the Great Work to amass my fortune.

In the light of these facts and conditions, do you, my reader, think I did the right or wise thing when I discontinued the higher Work in order to provide the material means to liberate my brain and intelligent powers for its resumption later on?

I believe you will agree with me, that I used bad judgment

in discontinuing the greater Work at all under all the conditions involved.

At any rate, I elected to continue the Great Work and carry it forward just as far as possible, using just enough of my time and effort upon the physical plane to provide the bare necessities of this life.

I am convinced that my own decision and judgment are in alignment with those of Brother Joseph who has had to face the same problem, and decide his own course of action relative to it.

I am convinced that virtually every man who has achieved spiritual illumination and Independence, and who has taken upon himself the obligation to devote his life to the service of humanity, has had to face the same problem and make the same election or choice.

Answering at least one direct question, therefore—I do not believe either Brother Joseph or I are in comparative poverty today because it is either wrong or otherwise inconsistent for us to have enough wealth at our command to enable us to devote *all* our time and efforts to the Great Work.

I am absolutely certain that our comparative poverty is due to the fact that we have been unwilling to neglect the interests of the higher work while we work out the financial problem alone.

Furthermore, we have not been willing to *beg* our friends and the friends of our Work to *give* us the material means necessary to solve our financial problems. We could not do that and be true to the obligations we have assumed.

But at this point I want to answer another question which has been asked me by friends of the Work very recently. It is this:

“Would you accept, from those who are both able and willing to give it, sufficient material means or help to remove your material burdens and thus enable you to devote your entire time and efforts to the direct lines of the Great Work for Humanity?”

Let me answer this question as definitely and as unqualifiedly as may be possible:

1. IF an individual should come to me and say to me:

"I have read and studied the teachings of the Great School until I believe I have a clear understanding of what they stand for and mean to both the world and myself. I am in complete harmony and sympathy with its teachings and its Work, and I want to align myself with them and be of active service as one of its visible Helpers. I have sufficient material wealth to meet all my own responsibilities, with a considerable surplus which I want to dedicate to the service of the School and Work. Will you let me turn over this surplus to you, as the representative of the School and its Work in America, to be used by you, without restrictions of any kind, as your own judgment may dictate for the best good of the Cause?"

My answer is, that I would have no right to refuse such an offer of help. If such an individual knows the meaning, the spirit and purpose of the Work; if he finds himself in perfect sympathy and accord with them; if he has more wealth than he finds necessary for the discharge of all his previously assumed responsibilities; if he desires to serve humanity by helping the School and its Work; if he has sufficient confidence in me personally to entrust me with the administration of his gift; if he makes his contribution absolutely free from all restrictions, so that I may use it as my best judgment dictates for the good of the Cause; if he does this without hope of material reward, and without "strings" of any kind whatsoever—I should feel myself bound by every consideration of justice to accept such help, and make it serve the Cause of Humanity to the very best of my abilities.

2. But, if the individual had not informed himself as to the teachings of the School; or was not in complete harmony with its message and its Work; or if he made his offer to help conditional upon his receiving some special consideration therefor; or if he placed restrictions of any kind whatsoever upon my right to use the help according to my own best judgment for the best good of the Work and the Cause; or if I sensed the fact that there was some ulterior motive in the background of his consciousness out of harmony with the Spirit and Pur-

pose of the Work itself—in any of these cases I would be equally bound to decline his offer of help.

And this, perhaps, more than anything else, is the real cause of the fact that material Poverty and Spirituality seem to go hand in hand.

I verily believe, however, that the time will come—perhaps not during my own present lifetime—when the real students and friends of the Great School and its Work for humanity will provide the material means necessary to enable the active workers to give their lives to the Work, free from the material burdens that hamper the Work so greatly today.

In this connection, I desire to answer another question that has seemed to bother some of those who have been accepted as students in the various courses of study laid down for them.

It is this: The purpose of the School is to make a real *Gift* of the Instructions to all who are accepted for studentship in any of the various courses of study. Under present existing conditions, however, there is a small expense incident to giving the instruction to each and every student. This is for postage, paper and printed matter necessary to carry on the work of instruction by correspondence. While this item of expense is very small in each individual case, nevertheless, when the entire student body of several hundreds, is considered, the expense for postage, paper and printed matter becomes quite an item. It would seem that the instructors who are giving their time and efforts to their students absolutely free of charge, should not be asked or expected to bear these expenses. And there is no fund from which to pay them. Inasmuch as the individual students are doing nothing whatsoever in the way of contributing to the expenses of their own schooling, it would seem but simple justice that each accepted student should bear the actual expense of postage, paper and printing necessary to his instruction. To the individual student this item would not exceed more than one or two dollars each year. But if it must fall upon the instructors who are already making a gift of their time and effort in giving the instruction, it would work a real hardship in some cases. Take an instructor, for instance, who is carrying on the instruction by correspondence with 20 stu-

dents or more, the matter of postage alone would mean possibly \$25 a year. I understand that some of the accepted students have actually complained because they are asked to bear the actual expense of postage, etc., incident to their own personal instruction. It does not seem possible that any individual who is receiving a gratuitous instruction could object to bearing his or her share of so small an expense.

In this connection, let me say that, if there are such students, the very spirit which would prompt their complaint would prove conclusively that they are not justly entitled to receive the instruction at all. The Great Law of Compensation lies back of all this Work; and the individual who is unwilling to meet his or her responsibility under that Great Law is not yet duly and truly prepared nor worthy and well qualified to receive the instruction.

Other phases of the Law of Personal Responsibility will be considered in future issues of the magazine.

Your Elder Brother,

J. E. RICHARDSON, T.K.

CHANNELS

Make channels for the streams of Love,
Where they may broadly run,
And Love has overflowing streams
To fill them every one.

For we must share, if we would keep
That good thing from above;
But if at any time thou cease—
Such is the law of Love.

Ceasing to give, we cease to have—
Such channels to provide,
The very founts of Love, for thee,
Will soon be parched and dried.

(French)

From the Valley of the Pines.

PINE NEEDLES

JOSEPH A. SADONY

THE KEY

He who has Hope has Faith.

He who has Faith has Intuition.

And he who has Intuition has the Key that will unlock the gate to the future.

No one else can enter.

He who knows nothing of a key will not look for a lock . . . so how can he enter?

FROM CHAOS

I believe we are all tested to see if we have the courage to dare to break the chains of base metals which environment has cause us to weld together and which anchors our desires.

Then again through influence and environment we may be forced to hoist the sail of our ship into the face of the storm, which carries us away from our heart's desire. . . .

But the test!

We must ride the storm, face about and set sail, and finally anchor in that harbor where the real beloved ones live, who have faith that we will surely come.

WAITING

I do not seek pleasure. I let it find me.

CREEDS

I accept Jesus, the Christ, as an example, a Man among men. The principles of life he taught, live.

And such living is evidence that they came into the world for the world's good.

Other Christs have been born to the world . . . that is certain. The man who lives to his highest ideals foreshadows the super-man.

Any man who can stand by his convictions, facing his best friend's criticism, is a real man.

All isms and creeds carry some good for the betterment of man.
But surely the world would be a better place in which to live,
if each religion would tear down its stone wall of defense.

Truth needs no defense.

It stands for itself.

Finally each will choose his individual beliefs when he awakens
to the fact that he possesses the faculty of discrimination.
Each, alone is held responsible for his own deeds. . . .

Jesus, in all his sayings, left a question . . . to make his hearers
think.

That they might sting the Soul into action.

BITTER—SWEET

I find that one must eat "roughage" and not condensed food
alone.

Or death will ensue.

And this applies to the understanding as well.

One must have bitterness to measure the extreme of joy.

As high as the roller rises, so low the trough of the sea.

It is the boundary of things.

RESPONSIBILITY

The unfit oft justly cry for vengeance.

Who is responsible?

Whose duty is it to realize most their own heritage of weaknesses?

Who should strengthen the coming generations?

Parents beget children and shape in them that which is lacking
in your inheritance.

Correct that which is more easily corrected when the frame is
being shaped before birth.

Create and build the Soul's frame work, so that it may support
all ideals of perfection.

As a garment may be made beautiful by an applied design.

Fulfill the law of evolution.

THE GARDENER

Nature is a most wonderful gardener and keeper.

Nature is very tolerant and patient, . . . but exact.

Nature never demands taxes until you have abused your rights.
Then it is deaf to all appeals for mercy.

Your rights have been forfeited.

If you refuse to pay it will send its agent Illness.

If you still refuse to live within your rights, it will send its
agent, Disease.

And if you remain still blind to your weaknesses, it will send
the reaper who will cut the thread that holds you to the earth
family.

The earth will demand your body. . . .

Yet . . . there is still a record of your failure.

OUTSTRETCHED ARMS

How blind people are, and what opportunities lie before them!

You have only begun to climb that ladder of life. . . .

One of an almost infinite number that reach Somewhere.

The top, you will finally reach.

Only do not try to climb it in a day.

There is more joy in laboring and in anticipating, than in
gloating over what one has won.

You are guided, and you know it.

Has not the way been made clear for you?

Nature's ways are strange, numerous, and positive.

The road is straight and certain for the one who can read the
sign-posts.

Who will walk erect with feet upon the roadway and faith
lighting the eye.

It is not necessary to bend the knee in adoration, if one stand
erect with outstretched arms.

In this attitude, as a Child of God, it is more becoming, than
to humble yourself through fear and superstition.

You would not have your dog crouch at your feet.

You would have him stand erect, with ears poised, and look
into your face with all confidence.

And it is with this attitude that we should go through life.

Crouching before nothing . . . not man, nor beast, nor even
one's own weaknesses.

THANKSGIVING

When I go into a church, I make-believe the Master is there.
And then I don't ask him for anything.

I thank him for what I have.

HERITAGE

In the blood of men live the germs of appetites which represent all the passions from the bestial propensities, to the highest spiritual sentiments.

They may be awakened by contact with their likenesses.

For that which seeks companionship longs for the society of numbers.

Each new experience awakens new faculties.

Each new experience fosters certain desires and appetites.

It is well to build the house of aspiration, with the completed model ever visualized, so that the materials may be selected.

Avoid awakening the sins within.

That would destroy the poise, the art and the symmetry of the structure.

Realizing the weaknesses of ancestors one can, by a new birth, overcome by will and understanding, even though repeated experience be lacking.

One needs but behold the spirit of failure in others, to sense what might befall.

It is the man who will not realize nor think of consequences, who suffers failure and defeat. . . .

Nature has seen fit to endow a man with individuality.

And has given him the ability to think . . . individually.

In no wise should he alter this individuality by imitating others.

If a man borrows from a neighbor, he must not only return . . .

Also there is the interest. . . .

There is no man, be he ever so humble or exalted, but has hidden within, a treasure, which alone entitles him to recognition, and an opportunity to display his virtue.

APPEARANCES

It behooves us to control our impulsiveness, and make sure that our motives in all things are understood.

The words of quick temper are received as they sound.
It is only the deep thinker who dives through the appearance
to study the motive before he judges.

WHAT IS INSPIRATION?

My dear Friends and fellow Students:

Do you know that you have deeply disappointed your editor-in-chief? I hear you say—"How come?"

Because, up to the time this manuscript goes to the printer, not a single answer have I received to the question I gave you for solution this month. I am puzzled at this. I do not know whether it means that you have lost interest in this "New Departure"; or, whether the subject of "*Inspiration*" is too deep for you; or, whether you are so busy whetting your appetite for "Christmas Turkey" that you have had no time to devote to a study of "*Inspiration*"; or, whether you are just plain tired of thinking, or simply disgusted.

You see, there is only one way in which you can make me know that you are interested in these lines of study. That is by sending me your several answers to the questions I ask you.

An idea comes to me as I write. I think it must be an "*Inspiration*". It is this: I will just continue the question—"What is Inspiration?"—another month. This will give you all a chance to express yourselves, and at the same time enable me to determine whether to discontinue this line of educational work.

Hence, the question still before you is—"WHAT IS INSPIRATION?"

Your Elder Brother,

TK.

THE LESSONS OF INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE

By A. C. K.

The "lessons" to be derived from rational experimentation, in both "good" and "evil" phases of human conduct, within those proper limits of degree, which Nature so clearly indicates to all who will heed her admonitions, constitute important elements of Nature's constructive purpose, as functions of man's voluntary, personal efforts toward the goal of Self-Completion.

When a normal, healthy child, full of the vitality of youth, and the curiosity of ignorance, is warned to "keep away from the stove", and not to "touch it", because it will "burn—hurt" he may have some idea of the kind of "hurt" that results from a bump, or a tumble, but can have no conception of what constitutes a "hot" stove, or flame, or what "burn" means, until he tries it, and thus acquires a satisfactory conception of them by actual experience. Such experiences generally constitute what may be called "primary" items of Knowledge in childhood.

The scope of his "experience" can furnish his awakening Intelligence, and undeveloped power of Reason, no similar or equivalent facts, from which his "curiosity" may satisfy itself by any process of reasoning deduction. An older person, however, may *guide* his hand close enough to a red-hot spot, or an open flame, to fully satisfy curiosity, and thus furnish him all the (constructive) experience he needs by way of physical pain or discomfort, without actually "burning" or injuring him—but, if he be left alone, unguarded and unguided, when "curiosity" impels the experiment, he may, in his ignorance, rashly place his hand on the red-hot spot, or into an open flame, and thereby suffer a serious "burn", before the unaccustomed sensation of pain can react upon his physical Consciousness.

That man needs, and must acquire, a full quota of "primary experiences", both good and evil, in order that they may supply that foundation of broad, comprehensive personal Knowledge, which shall be adequate to support a balanced structure (equal degrees of unfoldment of his physical, spiritual, moral and intellectual natures) in the development (self-completion)

of his Temple of Character, constitutes a self-evident phase of Truth, since, without an adequate foundation of "primary experiences", mere observation cannot correlate conception, comprehension, and reasoning deduction, for the necessary *extensions* of Knowledge.

About twenty-five or more years ago, when so many different brands of "half-baked" New Thought "cults", "isms", and "osophies", were springing up like mushrooms, flagrant perversions of this principle were proclaimed by some of the self-styled "leaders", in justification of whatever degree of immorality suited their purposes, or, seemed likely to prove most "popular", by appealing to vanity, sensuality, greed for material "success", etc., as the means of attracting a large and *profitable* "membership" to the movement.

Thus, by perversion of logic, obscured by meaningless platitudes, and couched in terms of high-sounding phrases which purported to represent plausible arguments, some of them aimed to absolve Conscience from any semblance of personal responsibility and moral accountability, and to justify almost any and every kind of evasion of social customs, civil and criminal laws, under what may be characterized as a modern version of the ancient Spartan Code, under which nothing was considered wrong or immoral—the only "crime" involved being that of "getting caught in the act".

That man's power of independent Choice, makes it possible for him to violate all laws of Nature, or to pervert all phases of Truth, detracts nothing from the beneficent *Purpose* of Nature's laws, or from the divinity of Truth. It merely proves that, in his condition of incomplete and unbalanced development, he may, if he so chooses, wilfully rush into the dangers that lie concealed from his view (Comprehension) by the darkness of his own Ignorance—and of which he shall become *aware*, only when he experiences the consequences of "bumping into them".

Man's need of "experience" in all things, both "good" and "evil", as elements of the proper and adequate basis of Self-Completion, however, does not justify any evil practices, perversions of natural Law, unrestrained license in the gratifica-

tion of senses, or the exercising of any of his functions, faculties, capacities or powers, beyond the constructive limits of self-control for Temperance.

Just as proper *guidance*, for instruction by actual experience, will enable an immature child to comprehend the meanings of "hot" and "burn", and the danger, or discomfort, attending physical contact with fire, by means of an actual (controlled) personal experiment, without the serious consequences that might (and probably would) be entailed by his own ignorant and unguided impulse to satisfy "curiosity"—so is it also in the case of more mature minds. Nature intends that man's developed powers of Reason shall *guide*, his Judgment *regulate*, and Wisdom *control*, his processes of acquiring extensions of Knowledge through personal experiences and experimentation (within the constructive bounds of Self-Control for Temperance) in the exercising of all his functions, faculties, capacities and powers, for balanced degrees of physical, spiritual, moral and intellectual development.

For those average beings, who have not yet attained the degree of balanced development which inspires a concentration of efforts toward the objective goal of self-completion, the matter seems tritely summed up as:

"The system in everything ought to be—do as you please as long as you please to do what is right."—*Sidney Smith*.

That man, as has already been stated, needs and must acquire a full quota of "primary experiences", both "good" and "evil" in each department of his physical, spiritual, moral and intellectual natures, constitutes one of the self-evident phases of Truth. These "primary experiences" should (and under proper, rational guidance or instruction will) however, result in a progressive unfoldment of the powers of his reasoning Intelligence, to the end that cumulative Knowledge may serve as the foundation of Wisdom, and independent Self-Control. By means of these, in turn, the widest scope of the higher degrees of Knowledge and Wisdom, derived from the lessons of personal experiences, may be acquired, within the safe limits of *constructive indulgence*, for the fulfilment of

Nature's purpose of individual progress toward the goal of self-completion, through all the necessary stages, or degrees, of balanced development of one's physical, spiritual, moral and intellectual natures.

Oh madness of Youth!—that holds not to the pathway of Truth—and tempers not the “heat” of Desires with Wisdom and Self-Control—that it may strengthen its divine heritage of natural “timbers”, from which each must fashion the “Temple” of his own Character—instead of weakening, and all but destroying, its divine “heritage”, while it strays so far from the steep and rocky pathway of balanced development, chasing the will-o'-the-wisp of sensual desires, selfish pursuits, or material ambitions, along the seductive by-paths of the unstable and perishable physical pleasures! When Wisdom finally prevails, and impels a return along a steep, flinty, and rock-strewn road of Penitence or Remorse, there may remain, under the “ashes of Youth”, none but a few remnants of the once sound “timbers” of its natural heritage—now mis-shapen and charred by the irrational and unguarded exposures to the “fires” of youthful Desires—from which to fashion the “Temple”.

AN INVITATION

This magazine belongs to us all. It is intended to constitute the visible medium by and through which all its readers and friends may communicate with each other, and give to the greater public the benefits of their knowledge, their experiences, their ideas, their views, their suggestions, their hopes and their beneficent influences.

Please get clearly fixed in mind the meaning of the above paragraph, and then give me your attention again.

I want each and every Student of SADOL, each and every Friend of the Work, and each and every reader of the magazine, to know that—as the Editor-in-Chief of the magazine—I am hereby extending to him or her a special invitation to WRITE FOR THIS MAGAZINE.

We cannot pay you for your articles. We do not receive anything for our own. But we can assure you that this invitation is both genuine and friendly. You have many subjects upon which you can write interesting and valuable articles which we will be glad to publish, and which our readers will be delighted to read.

We want to make the contents of the magazine so varied in subject matter, so human in its interests, so free from monotony, that our readers will not grow tired of it because they see so much in each issue from the pen of their editor-in-chief, from T.K., and from J. E. Richardson.

We have already received and published a number of most excellent contributions from a few of our many excellent writers; and we have received fine letters of commendation concerning them. We want more such contributions. In fact, we would like to have constantly on hand a large number of such articles from which to make up an assortment of "contents" that will make the magazine vitally attractive and interesting to every subscriber and reader.

Some of these contributions we may not be able to publish immediately, possibly for several months; but that fact must not be taken by the writers to mean that their articles are not acceptable. It simply means that your editor-in-chief is using his discretion and best judgment as to when and where each article may appear to best advantage.

I wish I could impress upon every student, friend and reader, the fact that you have not only an excellent opportunity to get your message before a most intelligent and appreciative audience, but you have a *Duty* and *Responsibility* to contribute your full share of the contents of our magazine, and help to make it the most intelligent, up-to-date, modern and progressive journal before the reading public today.

Now "*Get Busy*"—and let me have a cart load of contributions from which to help make up the finest and best magazine ever published.

I wish to ask, as a personal favor, that each and every contributor sign his or her articles just as it is intended the name shall appear in print. If you do not wish your own name to

appear, just sign your initials, or some *nom-de-plume* over which you desire to write.

And do not feel that you must write either scientific or philosophic articles, unless you prefer to do so. Write whatever you feel will be of interest to our readers and friends. And do not hesitate because of your lack of literary training or experience. I will help you in the matter of expression, by editing whatever you write, until I know it will make the desired impression on our readers.

One more item. Whenever you run across a beautiful poem, or a lovely sentiment in writing, send it to me. These short poems, articles, paragraphs and lovely sentiments are often the very things I most need for "Fillers". I can use them in the make-up of the magazine, to fill in vacant spaces between longer articles. Do not forget this, for it will be a real help to your editor.

Now, I hope I have said enough to make clear to all my helpers:

1. That they can be of real help to me in giving me good materials for the magazine.

2. That you have a vital *Duty* and *Responsibility* in the matter, and should give me your full support for the good of the magazine.

3. That I am not only *inviting* you but *urging* you to give me the benefit of every helpful item and suggestion you can make for the good of our magazine.

Please do not hesitate nor delay your help, for I need it, and will consider myself your debtor for whatever contributions you may send me for the columns of our growing and improving magazine.

Your Elder Brother and

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.

THE SOUL LIFE ELEMENT AND THE INDEPENDENT PSYCHIC

By A. R.

The Masters of the Great School tell us that there is a "Universal Soul Life Element" and that it is the addition of this Element to the other Life Elements that differentiates Man from the animal; and that it is only when the new-born infant child breathes into its being the first breath that it co-ordinates with the Soul Life Element and becomes a Living Soul.

Intelligence, Self-Consciousness, Reason, Intuition and Will, or Rational Volition are some of the Soul Attributes; without which combination man is less than a living Soul. For weeks and months the infant lies dormant, while the Faculties (or Capacities) and Powers of the Soul are forming, taking shape and developing the necessary strength for Self-exertion; whereas the animal rises upon its feet, or takes to the wing within a few hours or days of its birth. And then for years must the Soul labor to develop and expand the limitations of its Capacities and Powers before it can be said to have reached a period or age of discretion.

But what of this tender flower we call the Human Soul and what is its purpose? We look upon its manifestation as a thing most tender and uncertain; yet it is powerful and capable of directing the most powerful forces of earth; and not only of earth but of the Heavens also. So far as known there are no forces which the human Soul may not develop the power to control; a small child will lead, command and control a large and powerful animal. True, man in his indigent and undeveloped state, is surrounded, controlled and governed by forces of Nature of which he knows little, and to which he is a slave, until he becomes their Master. But when he develops the Capacities and Powers of the Soul and learns of the Forces of Nature and how to direct them, "it is possible to change the order of the Seasons, to produce in night the phenomena of day, to send a thought in an instant around the world, to heal or slay at a distance, to give our words universal success and

make them reverberate everywhere"; so says one of the Great Masters.

It need not take a great deal of stretching of the imagination on the part of the reflective Student of Natural Science to grasp the possibility of establishing a harmonic relation between his *own* Soul and the Universal Soul Life Element of Nature, from which his Soul evolved and which element is *everywhere* about him. And it should not take a great deal of additional stretching of the imagination to conceive of the naturalness of conscious and intelligent contact between the Individual Intelligent Soul of Man and the Intelligent Soul Life Element of Nature.

It is a well-established fact that two persons, who are in tune with each other, may transfer their thoughts from one to the other at great distances. Now if we reflect that these two persons are Souls, that they partake of the Soul Life Element of Nature, and that it is due to the fact that they *do partake of this element* that enables them to transfer their thoughts from one to the other at a distance, we may readily conceive of what a natural thing it should be to tune in on Nature and *receive the thoughts* stored up there. For is it not a fact that each Individual is, as it were, a pigeon-hole for thought forces, continually keeping the records of Nature *new*; and that the millions of Souls, wherever dispersed throughout the Universe, with their reverberant thought, constitute Nature's storehouse of knowledge?

So-called inventions, are they not *discoveries*? And if discoveries, *where* are they discovered? Do inventions spring from the physical brain, or do they lie out there in the Universe where *all* knowledge is waiting for some Soul who has the Intelligence, the Courage and the Perseverance to go out and discover it? If inventions spring from the brain of the individual securing the patent, why the years of thought, reflection and concentration? Why did the thing not just spring spontaneous from that Individual's brain with the first thought concerning it? Why the *tuning in* upon the *intuitive* forces of Nature and the long process of the mind casting about like a searchlight in the night, getting a glimpse here and a glimpse

there; finally forming a concept, applying Reason to the concept, and then bringing into being the thing called invention?

Is it not true that *all* that has found its way into books has originally come out of the *air*? Then it must be out there; the books being a short-cut to certain kinds of knowledge, more or less definite or indefinite. As we are continually making new inventions, and as the last book has not yet been published, it is self-evident that the human mind has not as yet succeeded in exhausting Nature's storehouse of knowledge. And as all knowledge so far acquired, and that ever will be acquired, must primarily come from the Book of Life, whose pages are the millions of souls that have ever lived, it is a self-evident fact that the human mind can and does *acquire knowledge* without reading it out of books or getting it from mouth to ear. Thus, there is apparently a place in the economy of Nature for the Independent Psychic who gets things out of the air.

But who and what constitutes an Independent Psychic? The answer is *anyone* whose Intuitive Capacity and Reasoning Powers are *active*; and with most of us these two functions of intelligence are more or less active, although it is seldom one is found in whom they are *equally* balanced. Do the intuitions one receives *necessarily* need to come from some spiritual being projecting the thought into the mind and consciousness of some physically embodied individual? No, that would be a subjective process; another short-cut to save the individual the trouble of acquiring Constructive Spiritual Development; or, in other words, the Rational Development of the Intuitive Capacity.

But how can the Soul reach out into the Universe and get the information it desires? The answer is simple enough—*by developing a perfected instrument and knowing how to tune in on Nature's perpetually vibrating record of every thought and act that has ever happened since time began*. Two persons who transfer their thoughts from one to the other do not project their thoughts into one another's brain; each reads or receives the thought of his own independent volition. Every Soul that has ever lived is a part of Nature's vibrating record of knowledge and they keep the records new and up-to-date;

so all that is necessary is to acquire the ability to tune in and get the desired information.

Some one is apt to inquire as to how one may differentiate between an Independent Psychic and a Subjective Psychic or Medium, since the methods of each at least correspond in some respects. In many respects the methods of both may *appear* to correspond; for, like the Subjective Psychic, the Independent Psychic may take a lock of hair, a scrap of writing, or some other object and apparently read a person's past and future from it. But what is the purpose, or what purpose does the lock of hair, scrap of writing, or other object serve? There is not the least virtue in any of these except simply to furnish a key to the vibration of the person who possessed them; and, so to speak, enable the Independent Psychic to tune in on that wave length; in other words, attract thought concerning that particular individual.

The lock of hair, scrap of hand-writing, or other object does the same thing in the hand of the Subjective Psychic or Medium, except that it furnishes the vibration to the Medium's Control. However, the difference in both the method and message given is very great; for the reason that in the case of the Independent Psychic, he Independently, Self-Consciously and Rationally reaches out and receives the Intuitions and imparts them in the same independent, self-conscious and rational manner; whereas in the case of the Subjective Psychic the information comes second-hand, from the Control through the Medium, and without the recipient having the least assurance of the veracity of the Spirit Control or of the truthfulness of the message imparted.

It appears to be the general impression among people that an Independent Psychic should *know everything* in the Universe, and that nothing could possibly be concealed from him. In many ways it would be just as logical to assume that a doctor, or lawyer, or architect, or minister knew everything and that nothing could be concealed from him. There are Independent Psychics specialized in various lines of endeavor, just as there are professional men specialized in the various arts and sciences. There is, for illustration, the Prophet who can

foretell events and who, perhaps, can tell of events that have happened in the past, just as there are those specialized in Journalism. But the specialist in Journalism who tells the *truth* and insists on the Truth being told, should be distinguished from the sensational reporter who cares nothing for the Ethics of Journalism and who is subject to the control and domination of his particular publication. Likewise, the true Prophet, who reads the pages of Nature's record of events and who *knows* and respects the Law governing Nature's Constructive and Destructive Principle, should be distinguished from the so-called "Test Medium".

I cannot, to any extent, foretell events; nor would I be likely to tell you when your relatives died, how they died, or when you will die; although I have a good many times seen things "true". However, it is not a phase of psychic development that appeals to my particular make-up. It is, in fact, as necessary for one to be adapted to that kind of work in the field of psychic development, as it is necessary for one to be adapted to the practice of medicine or any other particular profession. Where it is true that a prophet might be interested in philosophy and be somewhat of a philosopher himself, and that a philosopher might be somewhat of a prophet and foretell events after a fashion, yet each will do the best in his own chosen field.

Almost everyone has some particular psychic bent, if he will but develop it along constructive lines. Some might be prophets, if they would develop prophecy; some might be philosophers; some might be healers, etc., etc. Most of us get things out of the air every day; but we just haven't paid any attention to getting them independently and self-consciously and making rational use of them. How many of my readers have, at one time or another, got a "hunch" that a certain thing was going to happen? How many have got a "hunch" what to do in some emergency, such as serious sickness? How many have refrained from doing that which they *felt* was Morally Wrong, when it would have been legally right to have done it to their own temporary benefit, but to the injury of another? Here you have the potential Prophet, Healer and Philosopher.

KNOW THYSELF

By ELBERT A. HOLT

"Know Thyself!" This admonition comes to us from ancient Greece, and, under analysis, it places itself well toward the forefront of all philosophic injunctions.

It is clear and direct, of extreme import and unlimited in its scope.

It is clear and direct in that, in a sentence of two words, it delivers its message.

It is of extreme import in that a knowledge of self is essential in the grasp of nature's laws and nature's plan as they apply to individual life and conduct.

It is unlimited in its scope in that man seems to be related to all that is.

Physically man assays or traces back through the several kingdoms of nature to the mineral atom of "Mother Earth", whence he came, and to which, physically, he must, ere long, return.

Spiritually or psychically he is a spark of the Divine, and through the ever-evolving development or assimilation of the divinity inherent in all men he relates himself to all beings intermediate between man and God.

God evolved mother earth into man, breathed into him the breath of life and he became a living soul; and man, in his dual nature, physically and spiritually finds that he has kinship with all that is; from the atom to man and from man to God.

All that is, is an expression of result of law in action! All law emanates from the great central source, and that source we call God.

It seems that, at least for this earth. The Great Architect of the Universe made nothing completed or perfect except the Plan and the inevitableness of the Law: something left for each individual entity, in every department of nature, to complete.

Man, therefore, has a mission, and that mission, by the Plan and under the Law, seems to be individual or self-completion.

In the conscious process of completion the initial injunction

asserts itself—*know thyself*—and Solomon says: "What is man that Thou art mindful of him."

Briefly, man is an Intelligent Ego, Soul or Entity inhabiting a specially prepared physical body, endowed with a five-fold sensory organism, and all the passions, impulses and desires of the animal; but psychically he is a distinctive soul, differentiated from his animal nature in that he is Independent, Self-Conscious and Rational, with the Faculty of Intuition and the Power of Reason, Personally Responsible and Morally Accountable with unlimited possibilities of development as his inherent birthright.

Man is the connecting link between animalism and spirituality; the field of contention between animal appetite and spiritual desire; the crucible for the separation of the dross of sensualism from the spiritual urge of the divine spark for higher individual expression.

Man, as he progresses in a knowledge of self, realizes that, under the PLAN, every emotion, impulse or desire of the soul that craves for something higher is an urge forward on the pathway of progress that points toward completion.

He also realizes that there is an infinitude in this pathway of progress and development, for it reaches from the depths of human ignorance, in a gradually ascending scale, to the heights of mental, moral and spiritual attainment.

Again, in a knowledge of self, man realizes that individual progress and development is not a gift, but an earned increment, and must be paid for by personal effort.

In nature, justice expresses itself under the Law of Compensation; and compensation is the reward of personal effort in terms of perfect justice. Without the law of compensation, and the thought of antecedent life, justice might seem to miscarry; for, why are you what you are instead of a benighted savage? Why are you what you are instead of some moral pervert? Why were you born of a good moral parentage instead of a moral degenerate by inheritance?

There seems to be a law that governs these conditions, and in that law is perfect justice—*Know thyself* and learn the law.

The most enlightened soul on earth today has an ancestry

that traces back to barbarism.

The most benighted savage who lives today is potentially a master.

The average human lifetime is but little over thirty years, but a human soul is eternal.

The savage and the master have a common origin or there would not be a perfect justice in nature, and a perfect justice may be found in the thought that the master is simply the elder or more progressed brother, further along the soul's pathway and more in the likeness of his Maker.

Know thyself—There is light in every human soul, but when obscured by the darkness of ignorance "the light shineth in the darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not". Ancient Greece held aloft the lamp of learning, made its schools its pride, and fixed the thought for all time that "Knowledge Is Power".

The old Grecian civilization has passed away, but its precepts will live forever.

There is a practical side to everything, even sentiment itself should be rationalized.

A significant phase of true sentiment, rationalized in practical thought is—what is our duty to the coming generation from the standpoint of Education?

Never before in man's history have the general activities of life so demanded a skilled and educated citizenship.

The more general education of the present, and the passing generation, has progressed civilization in a ratio unthinkable except to those who have witnessed it.

Advanced conditions are such that at least a High School Education is essential for the individual man and woman to keep pace with his fellow-workers in the affairs of life.

Education is the basis of progress. Science exacts it, commercialism and warfare demand it, and religion pitifully needs it for the proper interpretation of its divine truths.

Ignorance is a crime against God and man, and those nations which do not foster the cause of Education have tied themselves to stagnation and have but a feeble, if any, part in the world's progress.

Facts such as these teach us that patriotic duty demands the espousal of the cause of Education; and the government for the common good of all the people, and the perpetuation of America's high standing among the nations of the world, should have as its first care the welfare of the public schools.

Through Education man has a better knowledge of self; a better knowledge of self makes possible a higher conception of God: hence the wisdom of the ancient admonition, *Gnothe se auton—know thyself*.

THE WANDERING PSYCHE

You, who un-united to yourself roam about the world.

Seeking some person or some thing to which to be united—

Seeking to ease that way the pain at your heart—

Deceive not yourself, deceive not others.

For united to that which you really are you are indeed beautiful, united to Yourself you are strong, united to yourself you are already in the hearts of those you love:

But disunited you are none of these things—

And how shall men desire a mere shell, or how will you offer them a husk saying, "There is fruit within", when there is no fruit—but only vacancy?

And these are the Gods that seek to come in the forms of men—the ageless immortal Gods—to make of earth that Paradise by their presence—

But while you bar the way and weave your own little plans and purposes like a tangle of cobwebs across the inner door,

How shall they make their entrance and habitation with you?

How shall you indeed know what it is to be Yourself?

EDWARD CARPENTER.

THE QUESTION BOX

ANSWER: This has reference to the series of searching and excellent questions at the close of the December QUESTION BOX on Mrs. Richardson's article on the subject of "*Prenatal Influence*", which questions I was unable to answer in that issue, for lack of space. The questions are several in number, and all grow out of, and are related to, the subject of prenatal influences in their relation to, and effect upon, the reincarnating Soul.

These several questions are so interrelated that a specific answer to one contains some of the elements of an answer to the others. In view of this fact, and the further fact that my space for reply is so limited, I believe I can accomplish the largest measure of good by a general consideration of the subject as a whole. I am sure that my questioner wants to be entirely fair, and that he would not intentionally assume, in his questions, any elements that are incorrect. At the same time, it seems to me that there are certain items of definite information which have not been duly considered by him in the formulation of his several questions. What follows must be received as an effort on my part to clear the ground of all "rubbish", so that we may see over the entire ground without the intervention of obstructions. To that end, let me proceed:

1. It is evident that my questioner takes for granted that reincarnation is a fact of Nature. The Great Friends on the higher spiritual planes of life tell us that he is correct in his assumption. We will, therefore, assume that it is so.

2. From the nature of his questions, he seems to take for granted also, the fact that, during the prenatal period of the unborn child, the mother's influence is directly upon the Soul of the reincarnating individual.

In this, however, he is in error—if the teachings and findings of the Great School, and its representatives upon the higher spiritual planes, are correct. For they tell us, without the least uncertainty, that the reincarnating Soul does not actually enter the physical body at all during the entire prenatal period, nor until the body of the infant is actually sev-

ered from that of the mother, and the first breath of life enters the lungs of the infant. In other words, they tell us that the reincarnating Soul enters into the physical body synchronously with the first physical breath of life.

If this be true—and there are scientific evidences that it is—then whatever influence the mother exerts during the entire prenatal period is, primarily, upon the forming *body* of the Soul that is to inhabit it at physical birth, and only secondarily upon the Soul itself.

Now, the question arises as to the exact nature and extent of the mother's influence upon the forming body of her unborn child which could have any effect upon the Soul which is to inhabit it at physical birth, but which does not enter it during the prenatal period at all.

Her direct influence upon the forming body of the child is that of giving to it a physical texture and a nervous organism or body delicately sensitive to the texture of her own body and in responsive attunement with her own emotional nature and nervous susceptibility. In other words, she is building a little body that is, in point of physical refinement (or lack of it), in harmony with her own. She is also building a body whose nervous tension and susceptibility are intensely responsive to her own emotional nature. When her work is done, and she has made the infant body ready for occupancy, she turns it over, as it were, to the reincarnating Soul, as nearly in tune with her own physical texture and nervous susceptibility as it has been possible for her to make it.

When the Soul enters and takes possession, it finds itself in possession of a physical instrument that is attuned to the nervous and emotional nature of the mother during the period of its formation. It responds most readily and perfectly to these inherited conditions and impulses.

But who shall say that these facts and conditions are not in the direct line of the evolutionary unfoldment and progress of the reincarnating Soul? I do not believe my questioner would dogmatize upon such a subject, and I am sure I would not do so myself.

Then here is another item of information that may have a

bearing on the subject, and possibly throw some light upon the general theme:

We are informed by the Great School, and directly by its members on the higher planes of spiritual life, that until the individual has reached the spiritual status of the seventh plane, the reincarnating process is an involuntary one so far as the individual himself is concerned. That is to say—suppose the individual has only reached the evolutionary status of the first spiritual plane. He is in the physical body. He dies and passes into the spiritual life. In due course of time he arrives at a point where his reincarnation becomes a vital necessity in the evolutionary progress of the individual Soul. But he knows nothing whatsoever about the matter, and less about the method and process by and through which his reincarnation is accomplished. Nature, however, does know, and has so provided that his reincarnation is accomplished without either his own knowledge or his voluntary cooperation.

The matter is accomplished by Nature alone, just as she accomplishes the death and decay of vegetation, and its rebirth through the fruits of each individual plant. The seed of the matured plant falls to earth, is buried in the soil of earth, springs up and brings to life and maturity another plant of the same species.

Until the individual human has evolved to the condition of refinement of the seventh plane of spiritual life, he has nothing to do in determining the time, the place, the conditions, or anything else concerning his reincarnation. Nature takes care of all that alone. But when he has arrived at the seventh plane, or at the evolutionary condition corresponding to the seventh. Nature invests him with the knowledge, the power, the responsibility and the ability to control the entire matter and process of his further reincarnation, or reincarnations. After he has attained to the evolutionary conditions of the seventh plane, he has reached his "spiritual majority", and henceforth he is "his own man", as we say upon the earth plane concerning the young man when he reaches his 21st birthday. We say he has attained his "majority", and become "his own man". Henceforth the law holds him responsible for his acts and conduct.

He can no longer hide behind the cloak of "infancy", or "irresponsibility".

If, after the individual has attained his "Spiritual Majority", he should reincarnate and return to this physical plane, it is because he has so elected, and not because Nature compels him to do so whether he wills it or not. If he returns to earth he does so for some definite and specific purpose that is for the greater good of humanity. He determines the time of his reincarnation, the place, the circumstances, and the individual body he will occupy during his stay on earth. In this event, it is easy to understand and appreciate the fact that he alone assumes the responsibility of his reincarnation.

After having arrived at a state of development where Nature herself invests him with the knowledge, the power and the responsibility for his course of action, it would seem but logical to assume that he would possess the knowledge and the ability to select a body through which he could work to the best advantage for the accomplishment of the definite purpose he had in mind when he determined to reincarnate again.

In making his selection of a definite body, he would know the exact nature of the mother's condition and character. He would know the exact condition of the mother's prenatal influence upon the body of her child. He would, in fact, know the exact condition of the body he was to inhabit, and the extent to which it would serve his purpose in coming back to earth voluntarily.

Hence, whatever may be the mother's influence upon it before he entered and took possession of it, logic and reason would suggest that it is all in the direct line of his own evolution, and the good of humanity.

I have not attempted to answer each individual question propounded by my questioner. I have simply endeavored to give him certain information that comes to me direct from the Great Friends who speak with absolute assurance as to the law and the conditions which govern the matter and the process of reincarnation both during the period when it is an involuntary process to each individual, and then the period after which it

becomes a voluntary process and under the control of each individual.

If my questioner has followed me closely, I hope he will find at least a partial answer to his questions, and perhaps obtain a viewpoint that will remove some, if not all, of the perplexities he encountered in his analysis of Mrs. Richardson's articles on *Prenatal Influences*.

But if I have failed to open the way for him to answer his own questions, I will be glad to try again, if he will indicate clearly wherein the light is most needed.

In closing this response, however, let me say that I do not assume to be able to unravel all the seeming inconsistencies that puzzle and perplex the souls of men. There are, in truth, several questions I could ask which seem to involve what appear, to my limited intelligence and vision, to be contradictions and inconsistencies. Some of these seem to concern Nature herself. Others have to do with humanity in its relation to Nature and the law of individual life. But, from the experience of the past, I am convinced that, when I have arrived at a point of development sufficient to understand, the knowledge will be forthcoming.

"Nature never did betray the heart that loved her", etc.

QUESTION: I desire to give you two examples which seem to conflict with your definition of "*Charity*".

1. My garden is full of many kinds of fruits and vegetables we cannot use. These things are worth something, but I do not have the time to market them. My time is worth more to me in other lines of employment. My neighbors really need these fruits and vegetables which we cannot use nor dispose of to advantage. But they are all able to pay for what they need and can use. Under these circumstances I cannot see but what I would be justified in inviting my neighbors to help themselves to what they could use. And if so, why should they pay me? I am giving them only that which we do not need, and which would be wasted if they do not take it.

ANSWER: So far as you are concerned, there is no reason why you should not invite your neighbors to help themselves, without consideration of any kind to you.

But how about those of your neighbors who accept your invitation? Each one who goes into your garden and takes that which is of real value to him, or which he can use to his own personal advantage, thereby fixes upon himself the obligation to *Pay*—under and in conformity with the Great Law of Compensation. It does not matter what may be your own attitude in the matter. No matter if you entirely acquit him from all responsibility to pay *you*; this does not relieve him from the responsibility to *pay to somebody* an exact equivalent for whatever he has received. If he pays *you*, then he fixes upon *you* the responsibility to balance the account with Nature. The mere fact that you do not want anything for your goods, does not relieve those who take them from the responsibility to *PAY*, under the Great Law. Sometime, somewhere, and in some manner each must *pay* an equivalent for whatever he receives of value. That is the *LAW*. We cannot alter it by our man-made decrees, however generously we may desire to do so.

2. My sisters' husband has deserted her and left her with three children to support. I feel that I should be able to help her all I can to carry her burden without fixing upon her the obligation to pay. How can I do it under the law as you explain it?

ANSWER: It is absolutely right for you to share the burden with her. And, as between you and her, you can relieve her entirely of any obligation to repay *YOU*. But, in just so far as you have helped her carry a burden that is justly *hers*, she, in accepting your help, thereby fixes upon herself the responsibility to pay sometime, somewhere, a just equivalent for the help she thus accepts. You can relieve her of all her responsibility to pay *you*, but you cannot relieve her of her obligation to balance her own account with Nature. The Law is absolute and irrevocable. But you may console yourself with the knowledge that Nature works no hardships nor injustice—when the final account is balanced.

There are a few who take the position that they have no *right* to make a gift, or render material help, lest they thereby

fix upon the recipient a burden of responsibility under the Great Law to *Pay*.

I do not want to say that this extreme view constitutes a rather plausible excuse for simply "letting humanity go to the devil"—as one friend put it. I sincerely hope, however, that nothing the Great School has promulgated would have the effect to kill out, or even repress the generous impulses of the Soul of anyone to make the burdens of this life as light as possible to those who suffer the privations of material poverty.

If my Soul is moved by the impulse of sympathy, compassion, pity or *Love*—or by the desire to do its rightful part in lightening the burdens and privations of those who *need*,—and my gifts, and offers of help are accepted with humility and gratitude by the recipients—I am going to go on giving, and helping, just as far as lies within my powers and resources, well knowing that Nature, and the Great Intelligence back of Nature, will adjust the burdens without harm to the poor and distressed who have accepted my gifts and my help. Let us not, in our desire to avoid fixing upon others obligations to pay, make the mistake of leaning over so far out of plumb that we topple over backwards.

Do not think, for one moment, that the Great School, or the Great Friends back of this Work, would deprive the world, or humanity, of one single generous impulse or desire to lighten the burdens of our fellows, or make the world brighter and happier for them. IF you have material means that you can spare, do not withhold it from active service to those who need, nor to some cause you believe will set it to work constructively for the good of humanity. Recall again the words of the Master, Jesus, to the rich young man: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven."

He was not concerned about how many obligations this might fix upon the poor who received his gifts. His thought was to encourage the spirit of *giving*. And so it should be with us today. Those who *accept* our gifts assume the responsibility of rendering an accounting for them under the Great Law.

In this connection, however, there is one vital point I desire to emphasize. It is this: The most valuable help we can render to our fellows is the help that enables them to help themselves. This character of service enables the recipient to maintain his own self-respect, and stimulates the natural pride to prove himself worthy of the gifts received. In our "gifts to the poor", therefore, we should use as wise a discrimination as we can, so as not to relieve the receiver of his sense of personal responsibility under the Law.

QUESTION: On page 221 of Vol. IV of the Harmonic Series (*The Great Known*), with reference to the subject of *Cremation*, the statement is made: "If it could be accomplished, the destruction of the physical body would destroy this earthbound condition at once."

Is this literally true in all cases? For example, is it true in cases of those who have led vicious and immoral lives?

ANSWER: If you will read carefully the entire paragraph and the two that precede it, you will discover that I was speaking of the magnetic bond which exists in all cases of embalming. The quotation you give is directed entirely to that magnetic bond. My intent was to make clear the fact that where ever that magnetic bond still exists—due to the embalming process—if that were the *only* bond remaining that held the soul bound to earthly conditions, its destruction would liberate the soul instantly and completely.

Your question, however, is well timed and pertinent. And you are right in that nothing can break the bond resulting from a past vicious and immoral life—except education and the slow evolutionary process of unfoldment until the individual, by his own independent powers and personal effort, shall have overcome the gravitative influence of the past.

QUESTION: A certain eye specialist teaches his patients the ability to relieve and banish pain by mental concentration upon a black spot. He claims that when the patient's memory of this black spot becomes perfect, no pain will be felt. Even surgical operations may be performed which ordinarily would require the use of anesthetics—absolutely without pain, or harmful after effects. He claims that his method is not a form

of hypnosis, in that he does not control the mind of the patient at all. Would you consider the effects of such a method destructive to the patient?

ANSWER: The doctor is correct in that the process employed is not hypnotic. In truth, it is merely one method of paralyzing the sensibility of the optic nerve for the time being. If you will try the experiment of looking steadily at the sun until the limit of nerve reaction to light is reached, then look away, you will observe that your power of sight is entirely destroyed, for the time. This also is because the nerve is paralyzed for the time. Sometimes it will require many minutes, even an hour or more, to regain the normal power of sight. Such experiment, if repeated frequently, will, in due time, produce complete and permanent blindness. This would seem to establish the fact that the process should be classed as destructive to the patient.

The act of looking at a black spot will temporarily accomplish a form of paralysis; but it will pass away, in due course of time, and the patient seems none the worse for the experiment. But I am convinced that any process which results in complete paralysis of the optic nerve, even temporarily, is a process that should be regarded with suspicion. I do not believe that nerve paralysis is either normal or healthy; and I further believe that, if repeated often enough and over a long enough period of time, it will result in distinct harm to the patient. Please note, however, that this is not because of any hypnotic influence of the doctor over the mind of the patient. It is merely due to the purely physical condition of paralysis of the nerve, and not to any mental condition whatever.

TK.

A SON OF LIGHT

By GEORGE PAUL BAUER

A true Son of Light must be a man in the highest—the divine—sense of the word.

He must have a true conception of his Duty.

His paramount endeavor must be his own highest develop-

ment and refinement—physically, mentally, spiritually, and psychically, in order that he shall be able and prepared to carry out his duties, observe his responsibilities, and fulfil his obligations in the best possible way, and to the highest degree.

A true Son of Light must be a conscientious follower and disciple of the masters.

He must, in his every-day life, exemplify "the living of a life" and that divine love-spirit which is the invisible connecting band of all good.

His every thought, and word, and action must be directed along those avenues of progress which shall make of him a brightly burning torch of divine light, illuminating the path of those who struggle in the darkness of ignorance, superstition and sin.

And finally, to a true Son of Light, duty must be a privilege and delight; responsibility must be to him a continual joy, and the "living of a life" the measure by which he gauges his happiness.

Only in that way can he become a beautiful flower in the garden of God, whose fragrance and perfume shall be a delight to him who rules the eternal universe.

"Ask and it shall be given you;

Seek and we shall find;

Knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

PRAYER

"We do not then say prayers: prayer lights up within us, and is a faculty which acts of itself; it acquires the vital activity which lifts it above all forms; it links the soul to God, and you are joined to Him as the root of the tree is joined to the earth; the elements of things flow in your veins, and you live the life of the worlds themselves. Prayer bestows external conviction by enabling you to penetrate the world of matter through a cohesion of all your faculties with elementary substances; it bestows internal conviction by evolving your very essence, and mingling it with that of the spiritual spheres.

BALZAC.

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